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Letter dated 20 May 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the letter of Mr. Anatoly M. Zlenko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, concerning the situation in Crimea.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 72 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volodymyr D. KHANDOGY
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the United Nations

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ANNEX

Letter dated 20 May 1994 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine to the Secretary-General

On 20 May 1994, the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of the Republic of Crimea adopted a decision on renewal of the validity of the Constitution of the Republic of Crimea of 6 May 1992. That act is aimed at the change of the legal status of the autonomous Republic of Crimea as an integral part of Ukraine. By that act, the legislative body of the autonomous Republic of Crimea, which is an inalienable integral part of Ukraine, has violated the Constitution of Ukraine, its national legislation in force, including the Law of Ukraine on the Status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, as well as the Law on the Delimitation of Powers between the State Power Authorities of Ukraine and the Republic of Crimea, of 28 April 1992.

This illegal decision, provoked by the irresponsible policy of the present leadership of the Crimea and aimed at undermining the constitutional order of Ukraine and its territorial integrity, cannot be qualified as anything other than an obvious attempt of separatist forces to put the internal political stability of Ukraine at risk and provoke tension in the relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. By that act, a threat to peace and stability in the region and in the whole of Europe has been created, and this may have far-reaching negative consequences in view of the present tense situation in this part of the continent.

Today, when the European States participating in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe have agreed on the exceptional importance of preserving and strengthening, without reservation, the principles of territorial integrity and inviolability of existing frontiers as a pledge of peace and security in Europe, such separatist ambitions of the leadership of the Republic of Crimea may result in further dilution and erosion of those fundamental principles of international law on which European stability rests.

From the very first days of the existence of Ukraine as an independent State, the President, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Government have exerted maximum efforts for the all-round social, economic and cultural development of the Crimea. The Crimean region was granted the status of an autonomous republic within Ukraine, the Decree on the Open Economy Regime in the Territory of the Republic of Crimea was adopted, a number of other important arrangements concerning the stabilization of the economy of the Crimea and full respect for the cultural and other rights of the population of the Crimea have been made. Ukraine indeed implements the policy of renewal of historical truth concerning deported peoples, and facilitates the return of Crimean Tatars and other peoples to their historic motherland. In other words, the leadership of Ukraine has tried to settle the issue of Crimean autonomy through all this period of time, thoroughly, flexibly and on fully legitimate grounds. To our regret, instead of making the most efficient use of the available legal opportunities to address the emerging challenges, the present leadership of the Crimea has chosen the road of extremism and blunt confrontation.

The position of Ukraine as concerns the so-called "Crimean issue" has repeatedly been communicated to all our foreign partners and to international organizations and has enjoyed full understanding and support on the part of the world community. I hope, Mr. Secretary-General, for your personal understanding and support of the legitimate actions of the Government of Ukraine in averting possible negative consequences of the anticonstitutional decision adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of the Crimea. Ukraine reserves the right, in case of further escalation of the situation as a consequence of irresponsible steps of extremist forces in the Crimea, to take all necessary measures to ultimately ensure the State's territorial integrity as provided for by its Constitution and the laws in force, in observance of the norms of international law.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(Signed) Anatoly ZLENKO
Minister for Foreign
Affairs of Ukraine